

WASHINGTON, D.C. - San Juan Bautista was honored this week as a new Preserve America Community.

First Lady Laura Bush, honorary chair of Preserve America, announced the designation on Thursday in a ceremony on Capitol Hill. Rep. Sam Farr (D-Carmel) was joined at the event by Priscilla Hill, mayor of San Juan Bautista.

"This recognition is exciting for San Juan Bautista, a city with such a rich history," said Rep. Farr. "It's about time that San Juan Bautista receives the recognition it deserves as a beautiful, exciting tourist destination worthy of our attention and care."

The City of San Juan Bautista was incorporated in 1869 and is home to the Old Mission San Juan Bautista, the largest in California. Other historic sites include the San Juan Bautista State Historic Park, which features the only remaining Spanish Plaza in the state, and the Juan Bautista De Anza National Trail

Mayor Hill has served on the City Council since 1990 and is in her fifth term as mayor. She is owner of Priscilla's Special Stuff, a downtown gift store in a historic building, and has lived in the city since 1985.

Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne and Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation John Nau also spoke Thursday's event. Preserve America is an interagency initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy the country's priceless cultural and natural heritage.

Participants include the White House; the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; the U.S. Departments of Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, and Education; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities; and the President's Council on Environmental Quality.

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